THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) to (d) The 9th Meeting of the India-China Expert Group of Diplomats and Military Officials was held in New Delhi on June 28, 2001. The two sides exchanged views on the maps depicting the Line of Actual Control (LAC) as perceived by the two sides respectively in the Middle Sector of the India-China boundary. The maps of the LAC in the Middle Sector were exchanged in Beijing in November 2000 at the 8th Meeting of the Expert Group. Both sides re-affirmed their intention to proceed with the process of confirmation and clarification of the LAC on the basis of the 1993 agreement on the Maintenance of Peace and Tranquility along the LAC in the India-China border areras. the next meeting of the Expert Group is expected to be held later this year.

Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

2647. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government continue to maintain its opposition to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as a flawed and discriminated treaty and that lasting non-proliferation can only be achieved through total disarmament; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the position in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government's position on this issue is contained in External Affairs Minister's *suo motu* statement in Paliament on 9 May 2000. A copy is enclosed as Statement.

Statement

SUO MOTU Statement by the Minister of External Affairs on the NPT review conference

The sixth Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference is currently taking place in New York. Consistent with our policy India is not attending the Conference.

2. Since independence India has been a strong proponent of global nuclear disarmament and has taken numerous initiatives towards this objective. We remain committed to nuclear non-proliferation. India holds that genuine and lasting non-proliferation can only be achieved through agreements that are based upon equality and non-discrimation, for only these can contribute to global peace and stability.

3. In 1995, the NPT was extended indefinitely and unconditionally. Hon'ble Members would be aware that 187 countries are today parties to the NPT. The proponents of NPT cite these developments as evidence of NPTs success; yet, it is also clear that there exist strong differences even among the NPT States Parties. Three of the five

Review Conferences held so far failed to reach any agreement on a 'final document'. The non-nuclear weapon States Parties to the NPT have increasingly felt let down by the lack of progress on disarmament, as well as non-compliance with the basic provisions of the Treaty.

4. The nuclear weapon States Parties to the NPT and their allies have not diminished the role of nuclear weapons in their respective or collective security calculus; on the contrary, new doctrines and justifications have been developed. NATO's new strategic concept, announced last year, ten years after the end of the Cold War, goes to re-emphasising a need for the continued retention of nuclear weapons. The nuclear weapons sharing arrangements within NATO also pose serious questions about compliance. Such developments are clear and continuing violations of the provisions of the NPT. This the NPT community has been unable to discuss, let alone deal with.

5. One of the basic obligations of the nuclear-weapon-states under the NPT was to prevent further proliferation. The record on this has also not been satisfactory. The nuclear-weapon-states have either been active collaborators in or silent spectators to continuing proliferation, including exports of nuclear weapon related components and technologies.

6. After more than three decades, the nuclear weapon States Parties to the NPT remain to be persuaded to begin any kind of collective, meaningful negotiations aimed at global nuclear disarmament. These countries were expected to display a special responsibility to implement Article VI; instead, this special responsibility today appears to be arrogated as a permanent special right to possess nuclear weapons and only for their exclusive security.

7. India is a nuclear weapon state. Though not a party to the NPT, India's policies have been consistent with the key provisions of NPT that apply to nuclear weapon states. These provisions are contained in Articles I, III and VI. Article I obliges a nuclear weapon state not to transfer nuclear weapons to any other country or assist any other country to acquire them and India's record on non-proliferation has been impeccable. Article III requires a party to the Treaty to provide nuclear material and related equipment to any other country only under safeguards; India's exports of such materials have always been under safeguards. Article VI commits the parties to pursue negotiations to bring about eventual global nuclear disarmament. It needs to be emphasised that India today is the only nuclear weapon state that remains committed to commencing negotiations for a Nuclear Weapons Convention, in order to bring about a nuclear-weapon-free-world, the very objective envisaged in Article VI of the NPT.

8. After the tests undertaken by India in May, 1998, we have declared that India shall only maintain a minumum credible deterrent and not engage in any arms race. The role of India's nuclear weapons is defensive; accordingly, India has announced a

policy of no-first-use and a policy of non-use against non-nuclear weapon states. In fact, this meets the demand of unqualified negative security assurances, raised by the large majority of non-nuclear weapon states to ensure their security. India has also indicated readiness to provide requisite assurances to the nuclear-weapon-free-zones in existence or those being negotiated. We have also taken new initiative calling for dealerting of nuclear weapons as a means of reducing the risk of accidental or unauthorised launch.

9. The NPT community needs to understand that India cannot join the NPT as a non-nuclear weapon state. Statements by NPT States Parties about India rolling back its nuclear programme are mere diversions to prevent focussed attention on the basic goals of the NPT.

10. India's commitment to global nuclear disarmament and lasting non-proliferation remains undiluted. While willing to commence negotiations on Nuclear Weapons Convention, India also remains ready to participate in agreed and irreversible steps to prepare the ground for such negotiations. A global no-first-use agreement and a non-use agreement against non-nuclear weapon states would meet the longstanding requirement for legally binding negative security assurances and assurances to nuclear-weapon-free zones. Another positive development would be a commitment by nuclear weapon states not to deploy nuclear weapons outside their own national territories. Nuclear weapon states also need to take steps to lower the alert status, through gradual de-alerting actions, consistent with policies of no-first-use and the defensive role of nuclear weapons. Tactical weapons that lend themselves to war fighting roles need to be eliminated. These would be some positive and concrete steps in the right direction.

11. India has been a responsible member of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and will continue to take initiatives and work with like-minded countries to bring about stable, genuine and lasting non-proliferation, thus leading to a nuclear-weapon-free- world.

Sino-Russian summit decisions

2648. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the Sino-Russian Summit decisions with respect to the US proposal for the NMD system;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are also aware of the resistance in Europe to this idea as expressed in the recent G-8 Summit;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and